

Reduce Fever/Symptoms

- Aspirin can be given to adults.
- **Do not give aspirin to anyone under age 20.**
- To relieve discomfort, give a sponge bath with lukewarm water.
- Keep a record of your loved one's temperatures in your care record.

Prevent Dehydration

Dehydration occurs when the body loses too much water and the water is not replaced quickly enough. **Dehydration can be serious or even fatal, especially in infants and the elderly.**

Begin fluids at the first signs of the flu. Contact a health care provider for advice before giving electrolyte-containing fluids to infants or to people with conditions such as heart or kidney disease.

- If your loved one has diarrhea or vomiting, give electrolyte-containing fluids.
 - Young children may have fluids such as Pedialyte™.
 - Teens and adults may have sports drinks such as Gatorade™.
 - Teens and adults may also have a commercially available powdered rehydration drink, or you may make a rehydration drink at home (see the following recipe).
- In addition to plenty of liquids, give ice and light, easily digested foods, such as soup and broth.
- If drinking liquids makes nausea worse, give one sip at a time until your loved one can drink again. Using drinking straws may help you give fluids to your loved one.
- If you cannot get your loved one to take fluids, call your health care provider. **Remember, dehydration is dangerous.**

Rehydration Drink for People 12 and Older

1 quart of water (tap water is OK)
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp table salt
3 to 4 Tbsp sugar
1/4 tsp salt substitute, if available

Measure all ingredients carefully. Mix well and flavor with lemon juice or sugar-free Kool-Aid®

Monitor Flu Symptoms

Consider keeping a care record to track your ill household member's progress and to take with you should you need to see your health care provider. Write down what you see or do, such as fever, flu symptoms, and any medicines given (include the number of pills or teaspoons given). Include the date and time. Make a new entry at least every four hours, or whenever the symptoms change.

Call a health care provider if your loved one has:

- A high fever
 - Babies up to 3 months old: rectal temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
 - Babies 3 to 24 months old: rectal temperature 103 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
 - Children 2 and older through Adults: oral temperature greater than 105 degrees Fahrenheit
- Shaking chills
- Coughing that produces thick mucus
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Dehydration (decreased urination, decreased tears, dry mouth)
- Worsening of an existing medical condition.

Call 911 for any of the signs below which suggest your loved one's condition is worsening:

- Irritability, decreased alertness and/or confusion
- Difficult breathing, fast breathing or chest pain with each breath
- Bluish skin
- Stiff neck
- First-time seizure or seizure that is prolonged.

For additional home care guidance from CDC, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm.

For additional information about H1N1 flu from SC DHEC, visit <http://www.scdhec.gov/flu/swine-flu.htm>.



South Carolina Department of Health
and Environmental Control

www.scdhec.gov

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and the environment.*

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The guidelines found in this brochure are current as of the date of publication.
H1N1 flu guidance and recommendations may be subject to change.



H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)
Prepare. Prevent. Plan now.

Guidelines for Home Care for H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)



What is H1N1 flu?

H1N1 Flu (referred to as “Swine Flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. If you are caring for a loved one with H1N1 flu, it's important to take steps to protect yourself and others.

Prepare NOW for the Flu

Make a plan now for influenza. Plan what you will do if members of your household have to stay home from work or school. Know what you will do if you have to stay separated from others for a period of time. **Keep a two-week supply of food, water, medications, and a disaster supply kit on hand.**

H1N1 flu Supply Kit:

- Thermometer
- Soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Disposable gloves
- Surgical masks. Consider respirators (specialized protective masks) for caregivers.
- Acetaminophen or ibuprofen or aspirin
- Bleach
- Paper towels and tissues
- Ingredients for rehydration drink: Sugar, baking soda, salt, salt substitute, powdered soft drink (such as Kool-Aid™).
- Drinking straws
- Any special supplies that you normally use to care for an infant, toddler, elderly person or a person with a chronic illness.

Recognize Flu symptoms

Watch for these common symptoms:

- Fever with cough and/or runny nose
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Diarrhea (more common in children).

Call your healthcare provider if any of these symptoms appear suddenly or are severe.

Prevent the Spread of Flu

Healthy habits will help keep you and others from getting and passing on the H1N1 flu virus.

- **WASH** your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and wash your hands afterward. Put used tissues in a wastebasket.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent germs from entering your body.

Any person with signs of the flu will be expected to:

- Stay home from work, school, and stores, and avoid contact with others until your symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours.
- Consider wearing a surgical mask when around others.

When a Household Member is Sick

Flu virus is spread when respiratory droplets from the mouth and nose of an infected person are spread to others. Protect yourself and others in your home:

- Household members should avoid sharing computers, pens and papers, clothes, towels, sheets and blankets, food or eating utensils, cups and glasses, soda or water bottles.
- You may also use disposable dishes, cups and flatware.
- The sick person's dishes and laundry can be washed with the rest of the household's. Wash your hands after handling dirty laundry.
- Clean commonly touched surfaces in the home or workplace. You can use a commercial cleaner or mix your own solution.

Disinfectant for household surfaces:

1 gallon of water and 1/4 cup of bleach
Mix up a fresh batch at least once a day.

- Wear disposable gloves when in contact with or cleaning up body fluids.
- Do not share masks or respirators.

If possible, one person should be the caregiver to limit exposures and reduce spread of disease.

- For best protection when giving care to the sick person, consider wearing a surgical face mask or N95 disposable respirator.
- For more information on masks and respirators, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm>.
- **Remember: NO visitors.**

Practice Hand Hygiene

People in the household should frequently wash their hands. Caregivers should always wash their hands before providing care. After caring for your loved one, wash again **and** apply alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Follow these steps for proper hand hygiene:

1. Wet hands with warm, running water and apply liquid soap.
2. Rub hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces and fingers.
3. Scrub nails by rubbing them against the palms of your hands.
4. Rinse your hands with water.
5. Dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet. A shared towel will spread germs.

Care for a Loved One with the Flu

A person with the flu should:

- Check with your health care provider who may prescribe antiviral medications.
- Rest and drink plenty of liquids
- Avoid alcohol or tobacco
- Take medications to relieve flu symptoms.

Antibiotics (such as penicillin) don't cure the flu.

Reduce Fever/Symptoms

- Give plenty of fluids.
- Give fever-reducing medicines, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol™), or anti-inflammatory medicines like ibuprofen (Motrin™) as directed on the container or by your health care provider.